NCA
VOC FOR IOP/FN
BACKGROUNDER NO. 5-5438 JANUARY 10, 1978
DOLPH HAERING/MUNICH

ROMANIAN EMIGRATION POLICY

ANNCR:

THE ROMANIAN GOVERNMENT HAS REPORTEDLY AGREED TO ALLOW ABOUT FIFTY-FIVE THOUSAND ETHNIC GERMANS TO RESETTLE IN WEST GERMANY DURING THE NEXT FIVE YEARS. THE AGREEMENT IS SAID TO HAVE BEEN REACHED IN WEEKEND TALKS BETWEEN ROMANIAN PRESIDENT NICOLAE CEAUCESCU AND VISITING WEST GERMAN CHANCELLOR HELMUT SCHMIDT. VOA'S DOLPH HAERING REVIEWS THE ROMANIAN EMIGRATION POLICY.

VOICE:

THERE ARE ABOUT THREE-HUNDRED-FIFTY-THOUSAND ETHNIC GERMANS LIVING IN ROMANIA NOW. WEST GERMANY CONTENDS THAT EIGHTY PER CENT OF THEM WOULD LIKE TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY.

BUT TO LEAVE ROMANIA HAS BEEN DIFFICULT. SINCE THE END OF WORLD WAR TWO, ONLY SIXTY-THOUSAND ETHNIC GERMANS WERE ALLOWED TO EMIGRATE. IN 1976 THREE-THOUSAND SEVEN HAVE BEEN LEFT. THEN LAST YEAR THE FITURE SUDDENLY CLIMBED TO ELEVEN THOUSAND. AND IN A SPEECH LAST SEPTEMBER, PRESIDENT CEAUCESCU INDICATED A RETURN TO THE HARDLINE APPROACH ON EMIGRATION AND FAMILY REUNION. HE CALLED FOR MEASURES TO DISCOURAGE PEOPLE FROM LEAVING EVEN IF THEY COULD FIND, AS HE ADMITTED, BETTER LIVING CONDITIONS IN THE WEST.

WEST GERMAN REPORTS LEAVE NO DOUBT THAT ROMANIA'S LATEST LIBERALIZING SWITCH OF ITS EMIGRATION POLICY IS DESIGNED TO GET INCREASING FINANCIAL AID FROM THE BONN GOVERNMENT. CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT HAS INCREASED HIS GOVERNMENT'S CREDIT GUARANTEES TO ROMANIA FROM THREE-HUNDRED-MILLION WEST GERMAN MARKS TO ONE-THOUSAND MILLION MARKS (ABOUT FIVE HUNDRED MILLION

DOLLARS.) ADDITIONAL WEST GERMAN AID TO FINANCE ROMANIAN PROJECTS IS UNDER CONSIDERATION.

THE ROMANIAN-WEST GERMAN AGREEMENT RECALLS THE WEST GERMAN-POLISH ACCORD OF 1975 THAT PROVIDES FOR WEST GERMAN CREDITS OF OVER TWO-THOUSAND MILLION MARKS IN EXCHANGE FOR THE RESETTLEMENT OF ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND ETHNIC GERMANS FROM POLAND.

WEST GERMAN OPPOSITION PARTY SPOKESMEN HAVE CALLED ON THE BONN GOVERNMENT TO SEEK ROMANIAN GUARANTEES FOR WHAT NOW APPEARS TO BE ONLY A DECLARATION OF INTENT TO LET GERMANS EMIGRATE. THE ROMANIAN SIDE HAS REPORTEDLY SAID THAT THE NUMBER OF RESETTLERS WILL DEPEND ON THE NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS. BUT TO EVEN GET AN APPLICATION FORM IN ROMANIA, DEPENDS ON A SPECIAL APPROVAL. WEST GERMAN COMMENTATORS FEAR THIS MAY GIVE THE ROMANIAN GOVERNMENT A MEANS TO STOP THE FLOW OF RESETTLERS ANY TIME BY CLAIMING THERE ARE NO MORE PEOPLE WANTING TO LEAVE ROMANIA.

WJL/PY